

Current Articles & Research Resources, May 24

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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Review [election night returns](#) for the primary runoff races. (Texas Secretary of State, May 23, 2018)
- Consider the difficulties faced by those who are working but [struggling](#) to afford a middle-class lifestyle. (CNN Money, May 18, 2018)
- Examine incidents of [gun violence in schools](#) going back to 1999. (The Washington Post, May 20, 2018)
- Explore publications and resources related to [school bus safety](#). (National Conference of State Legislatures, May 18, 2018)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below [here](#) or by calling 512-463-1252.

- "[The birth of the new American aristocracy](#)." By Matthew Stewart. *Atlantic Monthly*, June 2018, pp. 48-63.
Explores the "meritocratic class" in America, or the 9.9 percent of the population poised between the top 0.1 percent and the bottom 90 percent. Explains the factors that define this group and have led to its existence in a time of rising inequality and falling social mobility.
- "Why NFIB is fighting Austin's sick-leave mandate." By Will Newtown. *Austin Business Journal*, May 18, 2018, pp. 27.
Explains the National Federation of Independent Business' [NFIB] position on regulatory mandates imposed by local governments.
Related document at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=293797>
- "Building resilience." By Lisa McKinney. *Capitol Ideas*, March/April 2018, pp. 42-45.
Highlights the necessity of infrastructure planning for states as an investment in emergency preparedness, after the record-high cost of United States weather and climate disasters in 2017. Estimates Hurricane Harvey is the most costly hurricane in United States history, at \$125 billion.
- "Facing rising corrections costs, states are course correcting." By Katie Albis. *Capitol Ideas*, March/April 2018, p. 34-35.
Notes states spent \$57 billion on corrections in 2016, including prison operations, probation and parole systems, alternatives to incarceration, and juvenile justice programs. Quotes Bryan Collier, executive director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
- "Pre-K punishment under spotlight in federal data." By Christina A. Samuels and Alex Harwin. *Education Week*, May 16, 2018, pp. 1, 20.
Reports the federal government now requires compilation of data on the physical punishment of preschoolers in public schools.
- "Schools play catch up to rise in student vaping." *Education Week*, May 9, 2018, pp. 1, 14.
Attributes an increase of vaping in schools to a lack of regulation and the Juul device, which allows students to easily conceal their vaping habit.
- "[Black workers in right-to-work \[RTW\] states tend to have lower wages than in Missouri and other non-RTW states](#)." By Valerie Wilson and Julia Wolfe, *EPI Fact Sheet*, May 15, 2018, pp. 1-4.
Points out the negative association between wages and right-to-work laws, which affect both union and non-union workers.
Related document at:
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/right-to-work-laws-and-bills.aspx>
- "[State employees: Turnover rises in hot economy](#)." By Jackie Benton and Bruce Wright. *Fiscal Notes*, May 2018, pp. 6-10.
Notes Texas state government currently has the highest state employee turnover rate of the last five years, 18.6 percent in fiscal year 2017. Highlights the turnover crisis in correctional officers at

the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

- "Transportation infrastructure: Keeping Texas moving." By Kevin McPherson, Jessica Donald and Bruce Wright. *Fiscal Notes*, May 2018, pp. 1, 3-5.
Identifies Texas transportation funding needs for roads and highways, freight rail, transit, aviation, and ports through 2040, according to TxDOT's Texas Transportation Plan 2040. Report at: <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/transportation-planning/statewide-plan/plan.html>
- "How tariffs hurt Texas companies and why they must be used cautiously." By Kevin Brady. *Houston Business Journal*, May 10, 2018, pp. 34.
Discusses how increased tariffs on China are affecting Texas companies.
- "Degenerate federalism." By Chris Pope. *National Review*, May 28, 2018, pp. 29-30, 32.
Argues the major responsibilities of state governments, such as education and Medicaid, have become opportunities to claim federal funds and therefore shift costs to federal taxpayers. Proposes transforming matching fund programs to block grants to eliminate the incentive for states to inflate their expenditures.
- "The wages of death." By Wesley Smith. *National Review*, May 28, 2018, pp. 16-18.
Criticizes the expansion of assisted suicide and euthanasia laws. Claims that restrictions and strict guidelines do not guard against abuse.
- "Power of the prosecutor." By Maya Wiley. *New Republic*, June 2018, pp. 9-10.
Examines how prosecutors are reforming the criminal justice system from within instead of through the traditional legislative route. Discusses the sweeping drug policy reforms recently implemented in Philadelphia and former Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins' establishment of the country's first Conviction Integrity Unit.
- "The rise of the victims' rights movement." By Jill Lepore. *New Yorker*, May 21, 2018, pp. 48-50, 52-55.
Examines the victims'-rights movement and its impact on the criminal justice system. Reviews the laws and court cases that have increased victims' input in criminal trials.
- "How the politicization of history education led to Michigan's fall." By Gordon P. Andrews and Wilson J. Warren. *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 2018, pp. 19-24.
Argues the decline in Michigan's public education system occurred in part due to power shifting from educators to a few state officials with limited or no experience in schools.
- "When cancer was conquerable." By Sarah Constantin. *Reason*, June 2018, pp. 34-38.
Proposes bringing back the sense of urgency found in early cancer chemotherapy research by streamlining regulatory processes, getting new drugs to doctors faster, and basing FDA approval on a drug's safety rather than its efficacy.
- "How earthquakes are induced." By Thibault Candela, et al. *Science*, May 11, 2018, pp. 598-600.
Considers conditions in the Earth's crust that determine whether and how human activities can induce earthquakes.
- "Oversold?" By Sean Price. *Texas Medicine*, May 2018, pp. 32-34.
Explores progress and setbacks in the first few months of legally dispensing cannabis oil to Texans with epilepsy.

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